

# BRISTOL URBAN DESIGN FORUM

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Almondsbury  
Bristol  
BS32 4AQ

For the attention of Mr Simon Fitton

14 June 2011

ref: Gloucestershire County Cricket Ground 009/11

Dear Mr Fitton

## **Gloucestershire Cricket Ground, New Stand/Residential Block**

Thank you for bringing your scheme to the Panel for review.

It was encouraging to see representation from your client, demonstrating enthusiasm for this development. It was also interesting to hear about the strategic impact of the development plans for the Cricket Club generally. There is no doubt that the Club makes a significant contribution to the culture, distinctiveness and economy of Bristol. With this in mind the Panel has some concerns about the quality of this proposal.

The Panel was disappointed that the project did not measure up in architectural terms to the high aspirations of the Club, or to this unusual and distinctive site. In urban design terms there was little analysis presented of the wider area and hence recognition of the unique challenges and opportunities presented by the urban form of Ashley Down as a whole. The approach to the ground clearly could be improved, in collaboration with the other landowners, to achieve a strong sense of arrival and a more attractive space for all users.

The Panel's concerns are summarised as follows.

- The architecture should be 'world class'. Reference to recent precedents of modern buildings at sporting venues could be more informative than reference merely to the surrounding domestic buildings.
- The change from student accommodation is very significant in that permanent residences present quite different demands with the outside realm.
- The balance of quantity of seating provided to volume of 'enabling development' is considered unacceptable.
- There is a lack of active frontage to the public domain.
- The geometry of the site presents an opportunity to be exploited.

ctd over/

## **Bristol Urban Design Forum**

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- Dialogue with the surrounding buildings is weak both within and outside of the cricket ground. Working creatively with the neighbours, a high quality public domain could be created to the benefit of all.
- The main entrance is unattractive and therefore inappropriate.
- The scale of the development is overbearing and has the appearance of a city centre block, which is not appropriate.

In summary, the Panel felt a fresh approach to the design, confronting some of the challenges set out above, is required.

Notwithstanding all of the above the Panel recognises that this is work in progress and hopefully this response will assist in bringing forward an ideal scheme of 'landmark' quality to provide the 'missing piece of jigsaw' to uplift the surrounding area.

Yours sincerely

Geoff Haslam  
Chair, Bristol Urban Design Forum

cc: Bristol City Council Planning  
BUDF website